



ECOWAS URGED BURKINA FASO, MALI, AND NIGER TO PRIORITISE DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION AMIDST CONCERNS OF POTENTIAL EXITS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The regional body which took this position at the conclusion of its extraordinary session of the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at the Ministerial Level which held in Abuja Nigeria on February 8, 2024, stressed the critical need for diplomacy and unity in the face of regional challenges.

At the conclusion of the session, Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Chair of the MSC, Ambassador Yusuf Tuggar, said the decision of Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali to withdraw from the community has presented yet another challenge, however, members are heartened by the spirit of cooperation to resolve this challenge that upholds the values of the community.

He added that "We must carry forward the momentum generated in this session and continue our efforts to engage with the concerned member states in the spirit of understanding and reconciliation".

Ambassador Tuggar underscored the detrimental impact that the withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger could have on their citizens.

He emphasized that "The choice of these three countries to exit ECOWAS would not only bring hardship to their people but also undermine regional integration efforts," Ambassador Tuggar stated.

He further reinforced ECOWAS's commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, and reconciliation as the cornerstone of its approach to resolving disputes within the community.

Addressing the implications of such decisions on the broader integration process, Ambassador Tuggar characterized them as a small setback rather than a complete disruption of African integration. He emphasized the significant movement and interconnection of people within the ECOWAS region, emphasizing the strength of current integration accomplishments despite present difficulties.

In addition to regional integration and diplomacy, the council session focused on the pressing issue of terrorism. A significant decision was the call for the activation of the ECOWAS Standby Force to combat the existential threat of terrorism that looms over the community, including Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. Despite the imposition of sanctions, ECOWAS has continued to support these countries in their counter-terrorism efforts.



The President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Dr Omar Alieu Touray affirmed that ECOWAS remains committed to reflecting the aspirations of its citizens for accountable and democratic governance.

"We have moved from ECOWAS of states to ECOWAS of peoples, where the demands for democratic governance and transparency are paramount," Dr Touray stated. He underscored the organization's dedication to promoting these ideals across all member states.

As the session concluded, ECOWAS reiterated its dedication to fostering good governance, strengthening institutions, and ensuring the well-being of its citizens. The community stands united in its efforts towards dialogue, reconciliation, and combating terrorism, embodying the spirit of cooperation and unity that defines ECOWAS.

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About ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established when the ECOWAS Treaty was signed by 15 West African Heads of State and Government on the 28th of May 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria. The ECOWAS region spans an area of 5.2 million square kilometres. The Member States are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

Considered one of the pillars of the African Economic Community, ECOWAS was set up to promote cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa to raise the living standards of its peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations-among Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.

ECOWAS is implementing critical and strategic programmes that will deepen cohesion and progressively eliminate identified barriers to full integration. In this way, the estimated 300 million citizens of the community can ultimately take ownership of the realization of the new vision of moving from an ECOWAS of States to an **"ECOWAS of the People: Peace and Prosperity to All"** by 2050.